

Welcome

By Pam Hackbart-Dean

The Special Collections Research Center (SCRC) at Southern Illinois University Carbondale has acquired the archives of the artist and art educator Peter London. The materials span London's personal and professional life from the 1950s to 2016, documenting in detail the creative development of his career.

London earned his M.F.A. in painting from Columbia University in 1962 and his Ed.D. in art education from the Teachers College in 1968. Currently he is Chancellor Professor Emeritus at The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, a Distinguished Fellow of the National Art Education Association, and a practicing art therapist.



He has published numerous articles in journals on art and art education. He also has written two well-known books on art education, *No More Second Hand Art: Awakening the Artist Within* (1989) and *Step Outside: Community Based Art Education* (1994). London's innovative ideas about teaching, as featured in these writings and others, have been praised by his colleagues, and his implementation of them in the classroom has positively impacted his students toward artistic and teaching pursuits of their own. Moreover, his works of art have attained an international presence by being represented in numerous public and

private collections. As a writer, educator, and artist, London has been instrumental in shaping the discipline of art education, the artworld, and the younger generation.

Comprising more than 30 boxes, the Peter London Papers is more than just a snapshot of a prolific career. It includes London's personal and professional papers documenting his philosophy of education and art, research notes and drafts leading to his finished publications, teaching materials on art curriculum development, and correspondence with other scholars and students.

The collection is a valuable resource for research in the areas of art, philosophy, and education—all areas of strength of SCRC. Its content provides, for instance, insights about art as a socially and personally transformative aesthetic process, and demonstrates the connection between the creation of art and of a meaningful life as complimentary activities that mutually enhance each other. The collection furthermore provides a rich biographical portrait of an artist/educator whose career has significantly served the public good by contributing to our understanding of the transformative role of the arts in our private and public lives. London's lifelong intention has been to provide teachers with theories and practices aimed at enabling them to combine their skills with their students' interests in order to explore and celebrate life together.

Commenting on the collection, the art educator Barbara Bickel says: "Library archives are where future scholars can go to resurrect exemplary best practices. Dr. London's papers are the ones that we want to be able to turn to." Bickel believes that having access to such archival collections will help the public recognize the importance of art education for the greater community: "A restoration of the significance of the process of art as a form of inquiry and learning in education contributes to the making of a whole person and a healthy society."

The Peter London Papers are a welcomed addition to the archival holdings at SCRC. It further extends and enriches the department's materials on the topics of philosophy, art, and education, which include the works of John Dewey and Buckminster Fuller. The department's mission ever since its first official acquisition of first-edition texts by Walt Whitman in 1956 has been to acquire and preserve unique and rare historical materials and to promote the use of these materials by the SIUC community, visiting scholars, and general public. In this way SCRC plays an essential role in the greater mission of Southern Illinois University to advance research and education.

